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Subject: Mississippi Canyon Oil Spill - Fact Sheets
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Gentlemen, in course of working on our technical input to the Unified Area Command's Joint Information Center (JIC) on the issue about the odors from the oil spill, Dagny provided the list of questions below my signature as issues that seem to pop up in similar events. I imagine the JIC is aware of these issues as well. Dagny suggested it would be a good idea if we could work with the JIC to develop answers to these questions as well as others that may have surfaced specific to this incident and keep the answers updated as the situation changes – probably on the event website. I know the CDC Office of Communications has been working on incorporating social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) in risk communications and that may be something for folks to consider incorporating into the planning as well.

Not all of these issues are ones that HHS should be answering; these are just the ones that seem to keep surfacing. I am sure CDC/ATSDR would be willing to help the JIC frame answers to those that we can contribute to and share any social media strategies. Can you share these with the Unified Command through the RRT Co-Chairs for your respective regions? If they would like support on developing the information, please let us know.

Rich Nickle

ATSDR Emergency Response

Is it safe to eat fish? What about shellfish?

Will this cause cancer?

Is the air safe to breathe?

Is the water safe to drink?

Can this get into my drinking water supply? What if I'm on a well?

What are they doing to keep this from happening again?

Are people who are already sick more vulnerable to these pollutants?

I've been getting headaches/stomachaches/etc. Is it related to the spill?

Is it safe to swim? Boat?